

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

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S E C R E T VIENNA 0565

FROM US REP MBFR

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET DELOFF JANUARY 21

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF REPORT OF DISCUSSION OF US DEPREP
AND SOVIET DELEGATION MEMBER KVITSINSKIY WHICH TOOK
PLACE ON JANUARY 21, AS DISTRIBUTED TO AD HOC GROUP ON JANUARY
22 BY U.S. DELEGATION. BEGIN TEXT:

1. US DEP REP HAD CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET DEL MEMBER KVITSINSKIY
ON JANUARY 21. CONVERSATION WAS AT REQUEST OF US DEPREP
IN EFFORT TO GO MORE DEEPLY INTO BACKGROUND OF SOVIET THINKIN
ON FREQUENCY OF PLENARIES AND USE OF INFORMAL DISCUSSION GROUPS
AND FOCUSED ON THESE TWO TOPICS.

2. US DEPREP ASKED KVITSINSKIY WHAT WAS REAL BACKGROUND

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OF SOVIET RELUCTANCE TO DECREASE NUMBER OF PLENARIES. US
DEPREP POINTED OUT THAT SOVIETS HAD NEVER BEEN GREAT DEFENDERS

OF PLENARIES IN CONTEXT OF TROOP REDUCTION NEGOTIATIONS, THAT SMIRNOVSKY AND KHLESTOV HAD COMPLAINED ON OCTOBER 30 AT OUTSET OF MAIN NEGOTIATIONS THAT TWO PLENARIES PER WEEK WAS EXCESSIVE NUMBER, AND THAT KHLESTOV HAD INDICATED TO US REP PRIOR TO DECEMBER RECESS AND NETHERLANDS REP FOLLOWING DECEMBER RECESS THAT SOVIETS WANTED TO MOVE TOWARDS REPETITION OF SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE WITH EMISSARIES DURING PREPARATORY TALKS. IN LAST FEW DAYS, SOVIETS HAD APPERANTLY BECOME LESS POSITIVE ABOUT EMISSARIES AND WERE SPEAKING NOW IN TERMS OF INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS. US DEPREP SAID THE DISTINCTION DID NOT APPEAR TO BE GREAT TO HIM. MOST IMPORTANT POINT, HE BELIEVED, WAS THAT TIME HAD COME IN TALKS TO DEVELOP SOME FORUM FOR MORE DETAILED INTENSIVE DISCUSSION OF APPROACHES OF BOTH SIDES, A PROCESS WHICH COULD NOT BE CARRIED OUT IN FORMAL PLENARY SESSIONS. HOWEVER, IN EITHER EVENT, IT SHOULD BE CLEAR THAT PREPARATION OF INFORMAL GATHERINGS FOR MRE DETAILED DISCUSSION WOULD REQUIRE JUST AS MUCH TIME AS PREPARATION OF PLENARIES IF DISCUSSION WERE TO BE PRODUCTIVE AND THAT AN EXCESSIVE NUMBER O FPLENARIES WOULD CUT INTO THAT TIME.

3. KVITSINSKIY REPOLED THAT THERE WERE SEVERAL REASONS FOR THE SOVIET POSITION: MOSCOW OFFICIALDOM HAD BECOME USED TO THE TWO PLENARY AS WEEK RHYTHMN. MOSCOW WAS NOT HAPPY ABOUT THE ALLIED POSITION AND WAS NOT YET SURE THAT THE ALLIES WERE REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT THE TROOP REDUCTION NEGOTIATIONS. IT DID NOT SEEM TO MOSCOW OFFICIALS THAT THERE WERE MORE FREQUENT PLENARIES IN CSCE THAN IN THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS. THERE WAS A CERTAIN FEELING IN MOSCOW THAT THE EASTERN DELEGATIONS AS WELL AS THE WESTERN ONES WERE NOT VERY ACTIVE AND HAVING AN EASY TIME IN VIENNA. THE FACTS OF POLITICAL LIFE AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SOVIET DELEGATION AND THE MOSCOW CENTRAL WERE SUCH THAT IN HIS VIEW THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE SOME SPECIFIC GROUNDS TO JUSTIFY A SOVIET DELEGATION RECOMMENDATION TO CHANGE THE PRESENT PATTERN.

4. BEHOND THAT, KVITSINSKIY COMMENTED, MOSCOW SUSPECTED THAT THE ALLIES HAD SOME AS YET UNREVEALED MOTIVE FOR SUGGESTING A DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PLENARIES. FURTHERMORE, SOME OF THE WARSAW PACT ALLIES WERE QUESTIONING THEIR OWN ROLE IF THE
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NUMBER OF PLENARIES WERE REDUCED. THEY TOO HAD OFFICIALS AT HOME WHO WISHED TO SEE SOME VISIBLE ACTIVITY. THE ROMANIANS WERE A SPECIAL DIFFICULTY BY THEMSELVES. MOREOVER, THE SOVIETS THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A PORR PRINCIPLE FOR THE TALKS THEMSELVES IF THE PATTERN WERE CHANGED TO PERMIT USE OF SOME OTHER FORUM AND THIS FORUM WERE NOT PRODUCTIVE. IT WOULD BE WISE TO MAINTAIN A REGULAR PATTERN OF PLENARIES FOR THAT REASON.

5. US DEPREP ASKED KVITSINSKIY WHICH WAS MOST IMPORTANT OF THESE FACTORS. KVITSINSKIY SAID IT WAS RELUCTANCE OF MOSCOW OFFICIALS

TO CHANGE EXISTING FORMAT UNTIL GOOD REASON TO DO SO COULD BE PRODUCED. US DEPREP SAID ALLIES DID NOT PROPOSE TO REWARD SOVIETS FOR ENGAGING IN DISCUSSIONS DESIGNED TO ADVANCE THE NEGOTIATIONS IN COMMON INTEREST.

6. US DEPREP STRESSED THAT ALLIES THEMSELVES WISHED TO MAINTAIN REGULAR PLENARIES BUT AT LESS FREQUENT INTERVALS. HE ASKED, LEAVING ASIDE ISSUE OF FREQUENCY OF PLENAIRES, WHAT DIFFICULTIES SOVIETS SAW IN MORE INFORMAL DISCUSSION. KVITSINSKIY SAID THAT IF THERE WAS INFORMAL DISCUSSION, HE THOUGHT IT SHOULD BE BETWEEN US AND SOVIETS. US DEPREP SAID ALLIES REGARDED MBFR AS ALLIANCE ENTERPRISE AND NOT AS US-SOVIET OPERATION. KVITSINSKIY THEN SAID THERE WOULD BE SOME DIFFICULTY IN SELECTING PARTICIPANTS ON EASTERN SIDE, AGAIN, PARTICULARLY, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY, WITH THE ROMANIANS. KVITSINSKIY ENDED BY SAYING THERE SHOULD BE NO GREAT PROBLEM IN RESOLVING THESE MINOR ISSUES. THE MATTER WOULD SHAKE DOWN IN SOME WAY IN NEXT WEEKS.

7. REVERTING TO EARLIER DISCUSSION OF DATA WITH US REP ON JANUARY 17, KVITSINSKIY SAID SOVIET DEL HAD BEEN CONTINUING TO REVIEW THE FIGURES AND THAT ALTHOUGH OVERALL DIFFERENCE TO FAVOR OF PACT MIGHT BE AS MUCH AS 50,000 IF AIR AND GROUND FORCES WERE INCLUDED, HE COULD NOT SEE HOW THE DIFFERENCE COULD BE LARGER. END TEXT. HUMES

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